

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 00018 021813Z

44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 PC-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 /069 W

----- 091747

R 311725Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2608

INFO AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMCONSUL CALI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 0018

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT CO

SUBJ: PRESIDENT LOPEZ MAKES YEAR-END ADDRESS TO THE NATION

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN A BRIEF MESSAGE TO THE NATION ON DEC 30 PRESIDENT LOPEZ REVIEWED THE RECORD OF HIS GOVERNMENT, HIGHLIGHTING SUCCESSFUL TAX REFORM, AGREEMENTS WITH ECUADOR AND PANAMA AND A LOWERING OF THE RATE OF INFLATION. HE CRITICIZED TEACHERS (A POSSIBLE SLAP AT THE COMMUNISTS) AS WELL AS THE BUREAUCRACY FOR EXCESSIVE SALARY DEMANDS AND POOR PERFORMANCE AND DECLARED THAT 1976 WOULD BE A YEAR OF ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION. MOST SIGNIFICANT WAS HIS PROPOSAL TO CONVOKE A LIMITED CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION IN 1978 TO REFORM THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE AND THE ROLE OF DEPARTMENTAL ASSEMBLIES. HE ALSO CALLED FOR SEPARATE ELECTIONS FOR THE PRESIDENCY AND LESSER OFFICES IN 1978. THE PRESIDENT MADE NO MENTION OF THE STATE OF SIEGE OR OF PLANS FOR LIFTING IT. END SUMMARY

2. IN HIS YEAR-END TELEVISED MESSAGE TO THE NATION PRESIDENT LOPEZ SPOKE BRIEFLY AND FORCEFULLY. HE QUICKLY RAN OVER THREE AREAS OF SUCCESS DURING THE PAST YEAR: AGREEMENTS WITH ECUADOR AND PANAMA CONCERNING MARITIME BORDER DELIMITATIONS AND PASSAGE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 00018 021813Z

THROUGH THE PANAMA CANAL RESPECTIVELY, EFFECTIVE TAX REFORM MEA-

SURES WHICH HAD INCREASED REVENUES, AND REDUCTION IN THE RATE OF INFLATION TO 18 PERCENT. HE CALLED HIS GOVERNMENT ONE OF ACTION, NOT JUST OF WORDS.

3. REFERRING TO THE "WAR BETWEEN MIDDLE LEVEL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND THE ADMINISTRATION", HE STRONGLY CRITICIZED TEACHERS AND THE BUREAUCRACY FOR EXCESSIVE SALARY DEMANDS AND ACCUSED THEM OF ATTEMPTING TO DEVOUR THE INCREASED TAX REVENUES. HE SCORED DEPARTMENTAL GOVERNMENTS FOR POOR ADMINISTRATION AND ACCUSED THEM OF "EXTORTION" IN DEMANDING THAT THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT BAIL THEM OUT OF FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES AND THREATENING PUBLIC DISORDER IF SUCH WAS NOT DONE. LOPEZ SAID THAT INCREASED REVENUES WOULD NOT BE WASTED THAT WAY IN THE FUTURE AND PROMISED THAT THE ADDITIONAL MONIES WOULD BE DESTINED FOR PUBLIC HEALTH, IMPROVED EDUCATION, AND THE LIKE. HIS REFERENCE TO THE TEACHERS MAY WELL HAVE BEEN MADE AS A WARNING THAT THE DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES OF THEIR COMMUNIST DOMINATED UNION WOULD NOT GO UNCHECKED BY THE ADMINISTRATION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT 1976 WOULD BE THE YEAR OF ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION TO CONSOLIDATE GAINS OF 1975 AND IMPROVE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE GOVERNMENT.

4. THE PRESIDENT REITERATED HIS CRITICISM OF DEPARTMENTAL GOVERNMENTS AND SINGLED OUT THE DEPARTMENTAL ASSEMBLIES AS ANACHRONISTIC BODIES WHOSE FUNCTIONS OUTLINED IN THE CONSTITUTION OF 1886 ARE OUT OF TUNE WITH MODERN REALITIES. HE THEN PROPOSED A LIMITED CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION FOR 1978 WHICH WOULD REFORM THE FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENTAL ASSEMBLIES AS WELL AS THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD PROPOSE TO CONGRESS THAT IN 1978 ELECTIONS FOR VARIOUS OFFICES BE SEPARATED: ONE ELECTION TO CHOOSE THE NATION'S PRESIDENT AND DELEGATES TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION AND A SECOND ELECTION, TWO OR THREE MONTHS LATER, TO CHOOSE CONGRESSMEN, ASSEMBLY MEMBERS, AND MUNICIPAL COUNCILMEN.

5. COMMENT: THE BASIC THEMES OF THE LOPEZ ADDRESS ARE NOT NEW AND HIS REITERATION PROVIDES A GOOD GUIDE TO THE ADMINISTRATIONS PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING YEAR. HIS ATTACK ON THE BUREAUCRACY FOLLOWS SIMILAR AND MORE LENGTHY COMMENTS IN HIS "INSTITUTIONALIZATION" SPEECH IN MEDELLIN (BOGOTA 10750). HIS SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO TEACHER SALARY DEMANDS DOVETAILS WITH EDUCATION REFORM

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BOGOTA 00018 021813Z

EFFORTS NOW BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. AS

TED ABOVE, THE LOPEZ COMMENT APPEARS TO SERVE NOTICE ON THE COMMUNIST DOMINATED TEACHERS UNIONS. THE IDEA OF REFORMING DEPARTMENTAL ASSEMBLIES WAS FIRST FLOATEDS
N A RECENT SPEECH BY
LOPEZ (BOGOTA 12123) AND THE MATTER OF REFORMING THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE HAS BEEN PUT IN TRAIN BY THE CREATION OF A COM-

MITTEE, HEADED BY FORMER PRESIDENT ECHANDIA, TO STUDY POSSIBLE CHANGES. THE FACT THAT LOPEZ HAS PROPOSED A LIMITED CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO DEAL WITH THESE LAST TWO ITEMS APPEARS TO INDICATE THE PRESIDENT'S LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE CONGRESS. THE PROPOSAL TO SEPARATE ELECTIONS WAS MADE EARLIER BY FORMER PRESIDENT LLERAS RESTREPO AND NOW THAT LOPEZ HAS SUGGESTED THE SAME THING MAY INDICATE A LESSENING OF THE DISTANCE BETWEEN LOPEZ AND LLERAS (POSSIBLE TO THE DETRIMENT OF PRESIDENTIAL-HOPEFUL TURBAY). THE ABSENCE OF ANY LOPEZ COMMENT ON THE STATE OF SIEGE FOLLOWING HIS PROMISE TO LIFT IT SOON (BOGOTA 12222) MAY REFLECT A RETHINKING ON THE ADVISABILITY OF MOVING TOO RAPIDLY ON THIS MATTER. INTERESTINGLY, PRESIDENT LOPEZ MADE NO MENTION OF HIS SEPTEMBER VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES.

VAKY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT, SPEECHES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BOGOTA00018
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760001-0592
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975122/aaaaablq.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 SEP 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <19 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT LOPEZ MAKES YEAR-END ADDRESS TO THE NATION
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CO, (LOPEZ MICHELSEN, ALFONSO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006